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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5603
INFO RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0262
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0722
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO 3677
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2757
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 7486
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 5194
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [CE](#)

SUBJECT: POLICE CHIEF DISCLOSES ARRESTS OF SECURITY FORCES
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

Classified By: Ambassador Robert O. Blake, Jr. for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d).

[11](#). (SBU) Police Inspector General Victor Perera told selected members of the press on Tuesday, March 6, that "a large number" of police officers and troops had been arrested on charges of abduction and extortion. In some instances, he said, ransoms had been paid abroad. He indicated that among 433 people arrested since September over the abductions, a large number were either policemen, soldiers or deserters from the police and armed forces.

[12](#). (C) Since this is the first public admission by a senior government official that members of the security forces have been involved in and arrested for abduction and extortion, Ambassador asked the RSO to request an appointment for the Ambassador to meet Perera to get more details about exactly how many policemen had been arrested and the status of whatever investigations and prosecutions may be ongoing. The Embassy enjoys excellent relations with Perera and has regular contact with him. However, on this occasion, Perera's staff informed the RSO staff that Perera had been told not to accept any outside high level appointments or meet with the press without the direct authorization of Defense Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

[13](#). (C) COMMENT: This marks another clear attempt on the part of Rajapaksa to silence well meaning public servants who may be trying to address the significant number of abductions that have taken place. The Embassy will look for opportunities to talk more informally and less visibly with Perera to get his side of the story.

BLAKE